

THE JERUSALEM TRACT¹

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Praise be to Him who distinguished the followers of the Prophet² with the light of certain belief, who favoured the adherents of the true religion³ with His guidance to its fundamentals, who saved them from following those who deviate from the right path and those atheists who go astray, who guided them to follow the example of the foremost of His messengers, who led them to emulate his noble Companions, who eased their way to follow in the footsteps of the righteous ancestors of the community, so that they found refuge from the dictates of reason in their faith,⁴ and from the example and beliefs of the ancient peoples in the well-defined path.⁵

But they freely reconciled the deductions of human reason with the postulates of the divine law, and thus realized that the pronouncement of 'There is no god but God, and Muḥammad is the messenger of God' is not enough unless the fundamental principles underlying this formula are fully grasped. They also realized that the two parts of the formula,⁶ though brief, enshrine confirmations of the essence (*dhāt*) of God, of His attributes (*ṣifāt*), His works (*af'āl*), and the truthfulness of His messenger. They further realized that the structure of faith is based upon these four pillars, each of which is based upon ten fundamentals.⁷

The first pillar is concerned with the knowledge of the essence of God most high and has ten fundamentals: that He exists (*wujūd*); that He is pre-existent (*qidam*) and everlasting (*baqā'*); that He is neither a substance (*jauhar*) nor body (*jism*) nor accident (*'arad*); that He is not limited by direction (*jihah*) nor settled in a location (*makān*); that He can be seen; and that He is One.

The second pillar is concerned with His attributes and comprises ten fundamentals, namely the knowledge that He is living (*ḥayy*), all-knowing (*'ālim*), all-powerful (*qādir*), all-willing (*murīd*), all-hearing (*samī'*), all-seeing

¹ *Ar-Risālah al-Qudsiyyah*, now forming the third *faṣl* of *Kitāb Qawā'id al-'Aqā'id* of the first *rub'* of the *Iḥyā'*. According to Murtaḍā's *Ithāf*, ii. 85 al-Ghazālī wrote tracts to different cities, including one in three folio pages to Mausil which was also called *qudsiyyah*.

² *'iṣābat ahl as-sunnah*.

³ *raḥṭ al-haqq*.

⁴ The text has *al-ḥabl al-matīn*, an allusion to the Qur'ān, iii. 102. Murtaḍā, op. cit. ii. 87 considers that there is in this a reference to the Mu'tazilah and

the philosophers.

⁵ The transition from prayer to discussion is rather subtle without a perceptible break. I take *fa-jama'u fil qabūl* at the beginning of the next sentence to mean 'But they freely reconciled. . .'.

⁶ Here al-Ghazālī used the expression *ash-shahādah*, because each part of the formula is strictly preceded with *ashhadu anna* (= I bear witness that . . .).

⁷ Al-Ghazālī uses *arkān* and *uṣūl* for pillars and fundamentals respectively.

(*baṣīr*), and speaking (*mutakallim*), but is exalted above and immune from incorporation in phenomena;¹ and that His speech, knowledge, and will are pre-existent and eternal.

The third is concerned with His works and includes ten fundamentals: that God most high is the creator of His servants' actions; that these actions are acquired (*muktasabah*) by His servants; that they are willed (*murādah*) by Him; that He is gracious to create and to create from nothing; that it is His prerogative to impose duties (*taklīf*) beyond the capacity [of His servants],² and to cause pain (*ilām*) to the innocent; that it is not incumbent upon Him to do the most favourable [to His servants]; that [man's] obligations are all laid down in the divine law (*shar'*); that His sending of prophets is not impossible (*jā'iz*); and that the prophethood of our prophet Muḥammad (God bless and save him) is proved, and confirmed by miracles.

The fourth is concerned with beliefs accepted on oral authority (*sam'īyyāt*) and contains ten fundamentals: confirmation of the belief in the resurrection of the dead and the reckoning [before despatch to Paradise or Hell]; in the torment of [the dead in] the grave; in the interrogation of [the dead by the two angels] Munkar and Nakīr; in [the weighing of the actions of men in] the balance (*mīzān*); in [the ordeal of passing over] the bridge (*aṣ-ṣirāt*); in [God's] creation of paradise and hell; in the rules concerning the imamate; in the excellence of the Companions of the Prophet according to their order [in assuming office]; in the qualification necessary in the imam; and in the legitimacy of the imamate even without the imam being endowed with piety and learning.

The First Pillar of the Faith is the Knowledge of the Essence of God and Comprises Ten Fundamentals.

(1) The first fundamental is the knowledge of His existence. The foremost guiding light, and the path most likely to lead to it, are indicated in the Qur'ān, since all guidance (*bayān*) beyond that of God is superfluous:

The most high said: 'Have We not made the earth as a cradle and mountains as pegs? And We created you in pairs, and We appointed your sleep for a rest; and We appointed night for a garment, and appointed day for a livelihood. And We have built above you seven strong ones, and We appointed a blazing lamp, and have sent down o

¹ This seems to me the likely sense of the Arabic *munazzahan 'an ḥulūl al-hawāḍith*, a denial, in effect, of anthropomorphism (*tajsim*). The usually verbose Murtaḍā is vaguely laconic: *ghair ma'dūd fi ḥā'ulā*.

² Following Murtaḍā, ii. 88.

³ From 'the excellence of the Companions' the end is missing from the oldest manuscript. *Shurūḥ al-imānah* is in the discussion two, not fundamentals.

of the rain-clouds water cascading that We may bring forth thereby grain and plants, and gardens luxuriant.’¹

And the most high said: ‘Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day and the ship that runs in the sea with profit to men and the water God sends down from heaven therewith reviving the earth after it is dead and His scattering abroad in it all manner of crawling things, and the turning about of the winds and the clouds compelled between heaven and earth—surely these are signs for a people having understanding.’²

And the most high said: ‘Have you not regarded how God created seven heavens one upon another, and set the moon therein for a light and the sun for a lamp? And God caused you to grow out of the earth, and He shall return you into it, and bring you forth.’³

And He said: ‘Have you considered the seed you spill? Do you yourselves create it, or are We the Creators? We have decreed among you Death; We shall not be outstripped; that We may exchange the likes of you, and make you to grow again in a fashion you know not. You have known the first growth; so why will you not remember? Have you considered the soil you till? Do you yourselves sow it, or are We the Sowers? Did We will, We would make it broken orts, and you would remain bitterly jesting—‘We are debt-loaded; nay, we have been robbed!’ Have you considered the water you drink? Did you send it down from the clouds, or did We send it? Did We will, We would make it bitter; so why are you not thankful? Have you considered the fire you kindle? Did you make its timber to grow, or did We make it? We Ourselves made it for a reminder, and a boon to the desert dweller.’⁴

It should be apparent to anyone with the minimum of intelligence if he reflects a little upon the implication of these verses, and if he looks at the wonders in God’s creation on earth and in the skies and at the wonders in animals and plants, that this marvellous, well-ordered system cannot exist without a maker who conducts it, and a creator who plans and perfects it. Indeed, human nature itself seems to testify that it is subjected to the Creator’s direction, and directed according to His management. Hence God most high said: ‘Is there any doubt regarding God, the Originator of the heavens and the earth . . .?’⁵ Hence also He sent the prophets to call mankind (*al-khalq*) to the belief in the unity [of God] and to say ‘there is no god but God’.

¹ Sūrah lxxviii. 6–16; I have adopted, with minor changes, Arberry’s translation, but the numbering of the verses is according to the Arabic text.

² Sūrah ii. 164.

³ Sūrah lxxi. 15–18.

⁴ Sūrah lvi. 58–83.

⁵ Sūrah xiv. 10.

They were not commanded to say 'we have a god and [the rest of] the world has a god', for [the conception of the Unity of God] is innate in their minds since they were first created and [continues with them] in the prime of their youth.¹ For this reason God most high said: 'If thou askest them, "Who created the heavens and the earth?" they will say, "God".'² The most high also said: 'So set thy face to the religion, a man of pure faith—God's original upon which He originated mankind. There is no changing of God's creation. That is the right religion.'³

There is then in the nature of man and in the testimony of the Qur'ān enough evidence to make the necessity of [logical] proof (*burhān*) superfluous. However, we wish to produce such supporting proofs in emulation of the well known among the learned, as follows: It is self-evident to human reason that there must be a cause (*sabab*) for the origination (*ḥudūth*) of anything originated (*ḥādith*). Since the universe is originated it follows that there was a cause for its origination.⁴

Our statement that there must be a cause for the origination of anything originated is clear, since everything originated is related to time which human reason can assume to be early or late. The assignment of the originated to a particular time, which is neither before nor after its own, is necessarily dependent upon the one who so assigns it. Then the proof of our statement that the universe is originated is that material objects in the universe are either at rest or in motion, and since both rest and motion are originated, it follows that what is subject to the originated (*ḥawādith*) is itself originated (*ḥādith*).

There are thus three propositions in this proof. The first is our statement that material objects are either at rest or in motion. This statement is self-evident and requires no mental reflection for its comprehension. For he who can conceive a material object which is neither at rest nor in motion is both obstinately ignorant and unwilling to follow the path of reason.

The second proposition is our statement that rest and motion are originated. This is proved by their alternate occurrence, as is observable in all material objects, those that can be seen as well as those that cannot.⁵ For there can be nothing at rest which human reason does not decide that it is capable of moving, and there can be nothing in motion which human reason does not decide that it is capable of coming to a standstill. Of the two states of rest and motion that which happens to occur at

¹ Cf. Faris (p. 59), ll. 14–16.

² Sūrah xxxi. 25.

³ Sūrah xxx. 30. 'A man of pure faith' is Arberry's adequate translation of *ḥanīf* here; cf., however, the article by Fr. Buhl in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ii. 258–60.

⁴ The adoption of syllogism by al-Ghazālī is one

evidence of the influence of philosophy on *Kalām*. In their strife against the Mu'tazilah, theologians from al-Ash'ari to al-Ghazālī made increasing use of it. They sought to rationalize theology by buttressing tradition (*naql*) with reason (*'aql*).

⁵ In the three manuscripts *ma shūhida minhā* missing. It occurs in the printed text.

a time (*tāri*) is originated, because it did occur. The previous state [of an object whether at rest or in motion] is also originated, for were its eternity (*qidam*) proved, its non-existence (*'adam*) would be impossible¹ (as we shall show in proving that the Creator, most high and hallowed, is pre-existent and everlasting).

The third proposition is our statment that what is subject to the originated is itself originated. The proof is that were it not so, it would be necessary to assume the existence before everything originated of another so originated, and so on *ad infinitum*, so that unless all these originated things did come and pass, the turn of the one in question would never come. But this is impossible because there is no end to infinity.

Another proof is the revolutions of the celestial spheres. Were these revolutions infinite, their number would be either odd or even, or both odd and even, or neither odd nor even. But it is impossible that the number could be both odd and even, or neither odd nor even, for this would combine the positive with the negative, so that affirmation of the one would involve the negation of the other, and vice versa. Further, it is impossible for the number of revolutions to be even [only], since even becomes odd by the addition of one to it—and [behold] how the infinite stands in need of one! It is also impossible to be odd [only] since odd becomes even by the addition of one—and [behold] how the infinite stands in need of one! Finally, it is impossible for that number to be neither odd nor even, for this would mean that it is finite.²

The sum of all this is that the universe is subject to origination (*hawā-dith*), that it is therefore originated (*hādith*), that its actual origination (*hudūth*) is proved, and that its dependence upon the Creator (*al-muḥdith*) is *ipso facto* (*biḍ-ḍarūrah*) comprehensible.

(2) The second fundamental is the knowledge that the Creator most high is pre-existent (*qadīm*) and eternal (*azalī*), that there is no beginning for His existence, that He is the beginning (*awwal*) of everything, and that He [existed] before everything dead or alive. And here is the proof: Were He himself created and not pre-existent, His own coming into existence would have required a creator, and His creator another creator and so on *ad infinitum*, without ultimately leading to one pre-existent, first creator who is the object [of our search], and Whom we called the Creator (*ṣāni*) of the universe, its Initiator (*mubdi*) and its Contriver (*mubdi*).³

(3) The third fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is

¹ The printed texts contain what seems to be a superfluous word *li-'adamihī* before the word *li-awwalu*. It does not occur in the manuscripts and its omission yields more logical sense. Cf. Faris, p. 60.

scripts, but preserved in the printed text.

³ Two manuscripts have *ṣāni*, *bāri*, *muḥdith*, and *mubdi* and one has only the last three. The printed text had, in addition, *mubdi*.

² This sentence is missing from the three manu-

eternal without a beginning and everlasting without an end. For [according to revelation] 'He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward';¹ and [according to reason] it is impossible to imagine the non-existence ('*adam*') of that which has been shown to be eternal. And here is the proof: If the possibility of its² non-existence is assumed, then this could be self-inflicted or through the action of an opponent. But were it possible for a thing (whose existence³ is conceivable) to be annihilated by itself, it would be possible for a thing (whose non-existence is conceivable) to come into existence by itself.

Thus the occurrence (*tarayān*) of existence, like the occurrence of annihilation, requires a cause. But it is absurd and unimaginable to assume His annihilation through an opponent, for that would require the assumption of the latter's being pre-existent and co-existent with Him. Through the two preceding fundamentals His existence and His eternity were proved. How, then, is it possible to conceive of an opponent with Him in pre-existence? It is also impossible for this opponent to be himself originated, since it is less likely for the originated [to succeed] in its opposition to the eternal with a view to its destruction than it is likely for the eternal in its opposition to the originated with a view to preventing its coming into existence. For prevention is indeed easier than destruction, and the eternal is stronger than and more superior to the originated.

(4) The fourth fundamental is the knowledge that He is not a substance which occupies space and that He is too exalted and hallowed to have any relation to space.⁴ And here is the proof: Every substance which occupies a space is conditioned by this space, and is either at rest in that space or in motion away from it, i.e. it is subject to motion and rest which are originated, and what is subject to originated changes (*hawādith*) is itself originated. But if it were possible to imagine [the existence] of a pre-eternal (*qadīm*) substance which is limited by space, the pre-eternality (*qidam*) of all substance in the universe would be conceivable. Hence someone should use the term 'substance' in reference to Him, without intending to mean substance which is limited by space, he would be verbally wrong but not in meaning.

(5) The fifth fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is not a body (*jism*) composed of substance. [Its proof is this:] A body is composed of substances. But since it has been disproved that He was a substance limited by space, He cannot be a body, since every body is limited by space and is composed of substances, and since also it is impossible t

¹ Sūrah lvii. 3.

² I take the argument to be still purposely in the abstract.

³ I have taken *dawām* to be the opposite of '*adam*'

and translated accordingly.

⁴ Cf. Faris, p. 63: 'God is not a substance which can be isolated. Rather he transcends everything which resembles isolation.'

dissociate substance from composition (*ijtimā'*) and decomposition (*iftirāq*), motion (*ḥarakah*) and rest (*sukūn*), form (*ḥai'ah*) and quantity (*miqdār*), all of which are characteristics of the originated. But if it were permissible to believe that the Creator of the universe is a body, then it would be permissible to believe in the divinity (*ilāhiyyah*) of the sun and the moon or other parts of the material world. Hence if someone should dare to refer to Him most high as a body, without intending [to mean] His composition of substances, he would be wrong as regards the term, but at the same time right in repudiating its corporeal meaning.

(6) The sixth fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is not an accident inherent in a body or settled in a location. For body is subject to accident and is necessarily originated, and its originator would exist before it. Is it possible then that He could be incorporated (*ḥāllan*) in a body when He existed from all eternity alone, with none besides Him, and then created all substances and accidents afterwards? Besides, He is all-knowing (*'ālim*), all-powerful (*qādir*), all-willing (*murīd*), and creator (*khāliq*), as will be shown, and these attributes are impossible for accidents. Nay, they are not conceivable except for a Being (*maujūd*) who is self-existent and self-dependent.

It was thus established through [the discussion of] these fundamentals that He exists, self-existent, neither a substance nor a body nor an accident, while the whole universe is made up of these. Hence He resembles nothing and nothing resembles Him. He is the Living (*al-ḥaiy*), the Everlasting¹ (*al-qayyūm*), like Him there is naught.² How impossible it is for the created to resemble its Creator, the predestined its Predestinator (*muqaddir*), and the fashioned its fashioner (*muṣawwir*). All bodies and accidents are of His creation and workmanship, and by His predestination it is impossible for them to be like or to resemble Him.³

(7) The seventh fundamental is the knowledge that the essence of God most high is exalted above (*munazzah*) the notion of limitation by any direction. For direction is either up or down, right or left, front or behind, and these were created by Him through His creation of man. He created him with two extremities, the one rests on earth and is called foot, and the other, its opposite, is called head. The notion of up (*ismu'l fauq*) was originated (*ḥadatha*) to indicate what is above the head and the conception down to indicate what is near the location of the foot. [This is true] even of an ant creeping along a ceiling: what is down in relation to its position is still up in relation to ours. Then He created man

¹ This is clearly a reference to the Qur'ān, Sūrah iii. 2 with the word order reversed, probably by copyists.

² This is an exact quotation from the Qur'ān, Sūrah xlii. 11.

³ The manuscript and printed texts have *fastaḥāla al-qadā'u 'alaihā bi-mumāthalatihī wa-mushābahatihī*. I take this to mean as translated. Faris has avoided the crucial word *qadā'* altogether (p. 65).

with two hands, the one usually stronger than the other, and thus the notion of right was created and assigned to the stronger, and the notion of left to its counterpart, and thus what is on the one side is called right, and on the other left. Then He created man with two sides, the one within the range of his sight and towards which he moves, and thus [He] created the notion of front for the direction towards which man advances through movement, and the notion of behind to the counterpart.

All directions are therefore originated through the fact that man is originated. But supposing that man was created after a different fashion, such as round like a sphere, these directions would never have existed. Is it possible, then, that He was in all eternity limited by direction which is originated or that He became limited by direction after He had had none?¹ Is this possible by His creation of the universe under Him (*tah-tahu*)? But since the direction of under or down is related to the foot, may He be exalted above being limited by such direction, and above [the assumption] that He has a foot!² All of this is impossible for the mind to conceive. For the conceivable is that whatever is limited by direction is also limited by space like substance, or is limited by substance in the same way as accidents are.

But the impossibility of His being a substance or an accident has been proved. Therefore it is impossible for Him to be limited by direction. But if by direction is meant other than these two meanings it would be wrong to use the term though helpful for the meaning. Again if [it is conceivable] that He is above the universe He would be also opposite to it. All that lies opposite to a body is either equal to it in size or smaller or larger. But all these are assessments which necessarily require an assessor to make. May the Creator, the One and Ruler, be exalted above that!

As to raising of hands heavenwards at the time of petition it is because heaven is the [usual] direction of supplication.³ It also indicates the supplicant's recognition of the majesty (*jalāl*) and magnificence (*kibriyā'*) of the One to whom supplication is made, since the raising of hands upwards suggests His glory (*majd*) and most-elevated position (*'ulā'*). For verily the most high is above all beings by His omnipotent power (*bi'l qahri wa'l istilā'*).⁴

(8) The eighth fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is settled upon His throne, in the sense which He most high intended by

¹ The following passage is corrupted in the printed text and has, moreover, what appears to be an interpolation of some twenty words. I have followed the manuscripts as yielding more logical sense. Faris (p. 66) appears to have followed a text with a similar or identical defect. I have read: *abi'an khalafa al-'alam tahatahu? fa-ta'ala 'an an yakūna. . .* Murtaḍā's text has *tahtahu* in the commentary but *fauqahu* in the text!

² A parallel additional sentence may be reconstructed from the corrupted text as follows: 'And since the direction up is related to the head, may He be exalted above the [assumption] that He has a head!'

³ Cf. Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo, 1290 A.H.), i. 244.

⁴ Cf. the Qur'ān, Sūrah vi. 18, 61 *wa-huwa qāhiru fauqa 'ibādihī*.

settlement. [This is a sense] which is neither inconsistent with His magnificence nor implies any of the characteristics of [the finite such as] origination and annihilation. It is the sense which He intended by His saying in the Qur'ān: 'Then He lifted Himself (*istawā*) to Heaven when it was smoke.'¹ That was in no other way except by His omnipotent power (as the poet said: Bishr has gained control over Iraq, without sword or bloodshed).²

Such interpretation was forced upon the people [who seek the obvious meaning] of the revelation. Likewise those who seek the hidden meaning³ were forced to resort to interpretation. Thus God's words 'He is with you wherever you are'⁴ were generally interpreted to mean 'by His omniscience'. Similarly the words of the Prophet (God bless and save him): 'The heart of the believer is between two of the fingers of the Merciful'⁵ were interpreted to mean 'subject to His omnipotence'. Again his word (God bless and save him) 'The Black Stone is the right hand of God in His earth'⁶ were interpreted to [enjoin] regard and honour [to the stone.] Otherwise, if the apparent meaning [on all these matters were adopted] it would necessitate the impossible.

So also would His *istiwā*' [upon the Throne]. For if taken to mean settlement or possession it would necessitate that He who settles upon the Throne or possesses it, is a substance in contact with the Throne and that He is either equal to it in size, or larger or smaller. But this is impossible, and what leads to the impossible is itself impossible.

(9) The ninth fundamental is the knowledge that, while He most high is exalted above being limited by form (*ṣūrah*), quantity, direction, and location, He will be seen with the eyes in the everlasting abode. This is proved by His saying: 'Upon that day faces shall be radiant, gazing upon their Lord.'⁷ That He cannot be seen in the life here below is confirmed by His words most high: 'The eyes attain Him not, but He attains the eyes.'⁸ And also in His address most high to Mūsā (Peace be upon him): 'Thou shalt not see Me!'⁹

How then could a Mu'tazilite [who denies that God can be seen] presume to know of the attributes¹⁰ of God that which Mūsā did not

¹ Sūrah xli. 11.

² I suspect this line, ascribed to two different poets, one of whom is al-Akḥṭal, as an interpolation. The word *istawā* (gained control) is crucial both in this line and in the preceding Qur'ānic verse. A variant reading has it as *istaulā*. For the fine theological and philosophical distinction between the two see Murtaḍā, ii. 106-8.

³ The sense demands the rejection of *al-bāṭil* in the manuscript and printed texts used, and reading *al-bāṭin*.

⁴ Sūrah lvii. 4. This verse begins: 'It is He that created the heavens and the earth in six days, then

seated Himself upon the Throne. . . .'

⁵ Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 301; cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 164.

⁶ Cf. Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, i. 360; Ibn Mājah's *Sunan* (ed. Muḥammad Fuād 'Abdu'l Bāqī, Cairo, 1373/1954), ii. 982.

⁷ Sūrah lxxv. 22-23.

⁸ Sūrah vi. 103.

⁹ Sūrah vii. 143. This was God's answer to Mūsā's (the Prophet Moses) prayer: 'Oh my Lord, show me, that I may behold Thee!'

¹⁰ It is in the singular (*ṣifāḥ*) in the three manuscripts.

know? Or is it conceivable that Mūsā would have prayed to see God if seeing Him was impossible?¹ Ignorance is more befitting heretics and schismatics than prophets!

Even according to its apparent meaning, the interpretation of the verse² on seeing God does not lead to what is impossible. For seeing means here a kind of inspiration (*kashf*) and acquiring knowledge (*‘ilm*), although it is more perfect and clear than knowing. If it is permissible (*jāza*) to speak of knowing Him without relation to [space and] direction it is also permissible to speak of seeing Him without relation to [space and] direction. Again, just as it is conceivable (*yajūzu*) for God to see His creatures without being in an apposite position in relation to them, so it is conceivable for His creatures to see Him without being in an apposite position in relation to Him.³ Finally, since He can be known without asking how⁴ and without any reference to form, He can be seen under the same conditions.

(10) The tenth fundamental is the knowledge that God (to whom glory and majesty belong) is one (*wāḥid*) with no associate (*sharīk*), single (*fard*) with no equal, unique in creating and creating from nothing, and that He has neither match nor equal, and that He has no opponent to contend or alternate with Him. Its proof is His saying most high: ‘Why, were there gods in earth and heaven other than God, they would surely go to ruin.’⁵ Its explanation is this: Were there two gods and one of them resolved on a course of action (*arāda amran*), the second would be either obliged to aid him and thereby demonstrating that he was a subordinate being and not an all-powerful god, or would be able to oppose and resist thereby demonstrating that he was the all-powerful and the first weak and deficient, not an all-powerful god.

The Second Pillar of the Faith is the Knowledge of the Attributes of God and Comprises Ten Fundamentals

(1) The first fundamental is the knowledge that the Creator of the universe is all-powerful (*qādir*) and that He most high is truthful in saying: ‘And He is powerful over everything.’⁶ For the universe is thoroughly made and well ordered; and he who would consider a silk garment, well designed and woven with symmetrical embroidery and adornment, and could imagine that it was the work of a dead person or o

¹ According to Murtaḍā’s commentary (ii. 114), it is impossible to assume ignorance in a prophet of what is possible and what is impossible concerning God. Hence Mūsā’s prayer to see God presupposes that it was possible.

² *Wujūhūn yauma’idhin nāḍirah; ilā rabbihā nāzīrah.* (Sūrah lxxv. 22–23.)

³ Contrary to the Mu’tazilah and the philo-

sophers who insisted that, in order to be seen, the visible must be opposite the eye in a certain location or direction. See Murtaḍā, ii. 115.

⁴ This refers to the famous doctrine of belief without asking how (*bilā kaifa*).

⁵ Sūrah xxi. 22.

⁶ Sūrah v. 120.

a person with no power, would be devoid of native intelligence and [must be counted] among the foolish and ignorant.¹

(2) The second fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is all-knowing (*‘ālim*) of all beings, [that His knowledge] encompasses all creatures, that not so much as the weight of an ant on earth and in heaven escapes His knowledge,² that He is truthful in saying: ‘And He has knowledge of everything’,³ and that He provides a guide to His truthfulness by saying: ‘Shall He not know who created? And He is the All-subtle, the All-aware.’⁴ He has thus guided you to deduce from [His being the cause] of creation that He is all-knowing. For you could not deny the evidence of subtle and well-ordered creation, even in mean and trivial things, as confirmation of the knowledge of the creator how to design and regulate creation. And the word of God most high is the best in guidance and explanation.⁵

(3) The third fundamental is the knowledge that He is living (*ḥaiy*). For he who has been proved to be all-knowing and all-powerful is necessarily proven to be living. If it is possible to imagine the existence of one who is powerful, knowing, maker, and manager without being alive, it would be legitimate to doubt life in animals which alternate between motion and rest, or even in those who practice the arts and crafts. That would indeed be a plunge into the deep waters of ignorance.⁶

(4) The fourth fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is all-willing (*murīd*). He wills His works, and nothing exists except through His will. He is the originator and the bringer again, and the performer of what He desires.⁷ [How could He be otherwise, when] it is conceivable that He could have willed [at a given time] the opposite of every work that came into existence through His will; and that which has no opposite could also have come into existence through His will before or after [that given time]. His power (*qudrah*) encompasses the two opposites and the two times, but there must be a will that directs the power to one or the other. If in the identification of the known, knowledge could do without will so that it would be possible to say that a given thing came into existence at a time prior to the knowledge of its existence, then knowledge could do without power so that it would be possible to say that the given thing came into existence without power because its prior existence was known.⁸

¹ It will be observed that the arguments in support of this and other fundamentals of this second pillar are less detailed than those offered in support of the fundamentals of the first pillar.

² This is a close adaptation of the Qur’ān, Sūrah xxxiv. 3.

³ Sūrah ii. 29.

⁴ Sūrah lxvii. 14.

⁵ Since the proof of this fundamental is identical

with that of the first, the two fundamentals were treated as one by, among others, Abu’l Khair al-Qazwīnī. See Murtaḍā, ii. 138.

⁶ Why the attribute of ‘living’ was dealt with after those of ‘power’ and ‘knowledge’ is explained by Murtaḍā, ii. 139.

⁷ An adaptation of Sūrah lxxxv. 13, 16.

⁸ The simple meaning of this sentence is this: if His being all-knowing renders unnecessary His

(5) The fifth fundamental is the knowledge that He most high is all-hearing (*samīʿ*), all-seeing (*baṣīr*). He sees even the innermost and most concealed thoughts, and He hears even the creeping of a black ant in a dark night on a hard rock. Is it conceivable that He is not all-hearing and all-seeing when hearing and seeing are indisputably attributes of excellence not of scantiness? For how then could the created be better equipped than the creator, the fashioned object more perfect than its fashioner? Or how could they ever be equated no matter how much He might diminish, and His creatures and handiwork increase, in perfection? Or how again could Ibrāhīm's argument (peace be upon him) be valid against his father who in ignorance and error worshipped idols? He said to his father: 'Why worshippest thou that which neither hears nor sees, nor avails thee anything?'¹ For were this true of the God Ibrāhīm worshipped, not only his argument would be invalid, but also the truth of the word of the most high would be questioned: 'That is Our argument which We bestowed upon Ibrāhīm as against his people.'²

Now, then, since it is conceivable that He acts (*fāʿil*) without having physical members (*bilā jāriḥah*), and that He is all-knowing without [physical] heart or brain, it must also be conceivable that He is all-seeing without an eye and all-hearing without an ear, since there is no difference between the one conception and the other.

(6) The sixth fundamental is that He most high is speaking (*mutakallim*) a speech which is *sui generis* (*qa'imun bi-dhātihi*); it is neither sound nor letter. For His speech does not resemble that of any other, just as His existence does not resemble that of any other. [Human] speech is in reality that of the soul; sounds are formed into letters merely as indicators, just as sounds are sometimes indicated by movements and gestures. How could this [matter] be obscure to a foolish group, and be so plain to ignorant poets? One of them said:³ 'Verily the seat of words (*kalām*) is in the heart, and the tongue is a mere indicator of [what is in] the heart.'

[If you encounter] one whose mind does not restrain him from saying 'my tongue is created, but what it utters (*mā yaḥduthu fihī*) through my own created power is uncreated', do not entertain respect for his mind and restrain your tongue from addressing him. Again [if you encounter] one who does not realize that the pre-existent (*al-qadīm*) has no antecedent, and that in *Bismillah* the letter 'b' comes before the letter 's' and that hence the latter cannot take precedence over the former, free your heart from

being all-willing, then His being all-knowing also renders unnecessary His being all-powerful. According to Murtaḍā, ii. 141, the sentence in the text is by al-Ghazālī's teacher, Imām al-Ḥaramain, who used it in an argument with al-Ka'bi, the Mu'tazilite, who maintained that God's knowledge was independent of His will.

¹ Sūrah xix. 42.

² Sūrah vi. 83.

³ The authenticity of the line has long been questioned; it is ascribed to al-Akhtal but also to Ibn Ṣamsām. Another reading has *bayān* instead of *kalām*. See Murtaḍā, ii. 146.

any preoccupation with him. For God has His design in removing away some of His creatures [from the truth]: 'And whomsoever God leads astray, no guide has he.'¹

[Another example is] the one who is reluctant to believe that Mūsā (peace be upon him) could in this world hear a speech which is neither sound nor letter. Let him [dare] deny seeing in the next world a Being who is neither body, nor colour. If he could conceive the possibility of seeing that which is neither body, nor colour, nor quantity, contrary to his experience so far,² let him then allow (*falya'qil*) for the faculty of hearing what he allowed for the faculty of seeing. If he could conceive that He has one attribute of knowledge embracing all existence, let him then conceive that His essence has one attribute of speech embracing all that could be expressed in words.

Again, if he could conceive a small piece of paper on which is written the existence of the Seven Heavens, Paradise, and Hell and [this information could] be preserved in a small particle of the heart and seen through an eyeball the size of lentil seed, without the Heavens,³ Paradise, and Hell actually existing in the eyeball or the heart or the paper, let him then conceive [His] speech as read through the tongues, preserved in the hearts, and written in the Qur'ān (*maṣāḥif*) without the speech itself being incorporated into these. For if [it is conceivable that] the speech of God could actually be incorporated into the paper [of the Qur'ān] by the writing of His name on it, then it would be conceivable for actual fire to burn the paper [of the Qur'ān] by writing the word fire on it.⁴

(7) The seventh fundamental is the knowledge that, in addition to being *sui generis*, His speech has, like all His other attributes, existed from all eternity, and that it is impossible to be subject⁵ to creation and change. Indeed, belief in the all eternity of His attributes is just as incumbent [upon the believer] as belief in the eternity of His essence. God then is subject to no change or accident; He is eternal and eternally adorned with the most praiseworthy attributes, and will to all eternity remain above all vicissitudes.

Consider that whatever is subject to change (*maḥal al-ḥawādith*) is not free from it, and that whatever is not free from change is necessarily originated. Thus material objects are proven to be originated because they are subject to change in their substance and their qualities. Is it

¹ Sūrah xiii. 33.

² Faris has translated the Arabic parenthetical sentence *wa-huwa ila'l-ān lam yara ghairahu* as 'While until now nothing else has been seen' (p. 73 last line).

³ The printed edition adds here *al-arḍ* (the Earth).

⁴ This seems to me the most likely sense of a

confused passage which is differently worded in the manuscript and the printed versions. See Murtaḍā, ii. 148-50.

⁵ Contrary to Faris (p. 74) I take the hidden pronoun in *yakūna* to refer, as the context demands, to the speech of God (as one of His attributes) and not to God himself.

conceivable that their Creator could, like them, be subject to change? On the basis of these [arguments we conclude that] His speech is ancient and *sui generis*, and that what is created is merely the sounds which indicate the speech.

It is, of course, conceivable for a father to cherish a desire that his not-yet-born son should seek education (*ta'allum*), and that after his birth and growth God creates in him an awareness of his father's secret desire.¹ It then becomes incumbent upon the son to fulfil that desire which remained a secret in the father's heart till the son knew of it. [If this is conceivable] then let it be so concerning the command to Mūsā (peace be upon him) by the most high: 'Put off your shoes.'² Apprehend then that this command coexisted with God from eternity and that it was addressed to Mūsā after his birth and growth when God created in him an awareness of that command and a faculty to hear that eternal speech.

(8) The eighth fundamental is that His knowledge is pre-existent and that He is ever all-knowing by virtue of His essence and His attributes, and [His knowledge encompasses all] which He creates. But whatever creation comes into existence, His knowledge of it is not created; it is simply plain to Him through [His] eternal knowledge. Thus if we were provided with the knowledge that Zaid would arrive at sunrise, and it is assumed that this knowledge remained valid till sunrise, Zaid's arrival at that moment would have been known to us through that foreknowledge alone without need for another new knowledge. This is the manner of comprehending the pre-existence of God's knowledge most high.

(9) The ninth fundamental is that His will is pre-existent and from all eternity it regulates the various creations at the right time and according to His prior eternal knowledge. For were His will created He³ would be subject to phenomenal change, or were it to reside in other than His essence He would have no control over it. An example: you yourself cannot move if the motive is outside yourself, for then no matter how able (willing) you feel, your will is dependent upon another will, and this will depend upon another *ad infinitum*. If the existence of one will is conceivable without another, then it is conceivable that the universe could come into existence without the will [of God].

(10) The tenth fundamental is that God most high is all-knowing with His knowledge (*'ālimun bi-'ilm*),⁴ living with His being (*ḥaiun bi-ḥayāh*),

¹ This is an oblique reference to al-Ghazālī's father who, according to Subki, iv. 102, prayed to God to grant him a son who would be a learned preacher.

² Sūrah xx. 12.

³ The sense demands that the hidden pronoun in *ḥayāh* must refer to God and not, as assumed by

Faris (p. 76), to His will. Cf. Murtaḍā's Commentary, ii. 153.

⁴ This attribute is missing from Faris's translation (p. 76), although al-Ghazālī's exposition with it and the exposition is translated. The meaning of this and the following expression is that . . . through an attribute called . . .

all-powerful with His power (*qadīrun bi-quḍrah*), all-willing with His will (*murīdun bi-irādah*), all-speaking with His speech (*mutakallimun bi-kalām*), all-hearing with His hearing (*samī' bi-sam'*), all-seeing with His sight (*baṣīrun bi-baṣar*), and that He has these distinguished characteristics (*auṣāf*) of His eternal attributes.

If one says 'a learned man without knowledge' it is like saying 'a rich man without wealth', 'learning without the learned', and 'learned without learning'. For learning (knowledge), the learned, and the thing known are as inseparable as killing, the killer, and the killed. It is not possible to imagine a killer without killing and killed, or a killed without a killer and killing. Similarly it is not possible to imagine learned without learning, learning without something known, or something known without one learned. The three are inseparable in the mind. He who considers it legitimate to separate the learned from learning, let him also legitimize the separation of the learned from the thing learned, and the separation of learning from the learned, since there is no difference between these analogies (*iḍāfāt*).¹

The Third Pillar of the Faith is the Knowledge of the Works of God and Comprises Ten Fundamentals

(1) The first fundamental: the knowledge that everything originated in the universe is His work, creation, and invention. None other than Him is creator and originator. He created men and created their actions,² and initiated their capacity (*quḍrah*) and their movement (*harakah*).³ Thus all the actions of His servants are created by Him and dependent upon His power (*quḍrah*), as it is confirmed in His words most high: 'God is the Creator of every thing';⁴ 'And God created you and what you make';⁵ 'Be secret in your speech, or proclaim it, He knows the thoughts within the breasts. Shall He not know who created? And He is the All-subtle, the All-aware.'⁶

He commanded His servants to be cautious in their words, deeds, and secret thoughts,⁷ for He knows their tendencies and indicated [this] theologians invariably affirm His attributes in addition to the conception of His essence, but they are careful not to say that the attributes are identical with or other than the essence. To them the essence and the attributes must be considered as inseparable. Cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 154.

¹ If actually written by al-Ghazālī this paragraph is obviously not up to his usual standards. It has very little relevance and does not seem to clinch the previous argument. The comparison between learning and killing is hardly felicitous, but with regard to learning much is lost through translation. The three crucial expressions are 'ilm (knowledge, learning), 'ālim (knowing, learned), and ma'lūm (the thing known, or the thing learned).

² Faris translated: 'He created men and made

them' (p. 77). We should read *wa-ṣun'ahim* (and their actions) and not *wa-ṣana'ahum* (and He created them). Hence the London MS. 45818 and the Cairo MS. 66 both have *wa-ṣan'atahum* (and their handiwork). Cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 162.

³ Murtaḍā, loc. cit., explains this and the previous expression to mean movement in general. There is thus no support for Faris's translation of *quḍrah* in this context as meaning 'freedom'.

⁴ Sūrah xxxix. 62.

⁵ Sūrah, xxxvii. 96.

⁶ Sūrah lxvii. 13-14.

⁷ The text has *asrār* and *aḍmār* (pl. of *ḍamīr*). Murtaḍā, ii. 164 explains that *aḍmār* was used, in preference to *ḍamā'ir*, to agree with *asrār*. I have taken both to mean one thing.

knowledge [in the verse 'shall He not know who created?' by reminding His servants that He is the] creator.¹ Is it conceivable that He is not the creator of His servant's works when His power is perfect, without any shortcomings, and when upon it the corporeal movements (*harakatu abdān*) of His servant depend? Such movements are similar in nature, and His power controls them inevitably. What is then [the presumed factor] which can restrict its control to some and not the others of these similar movements (*harakāt*)?² Or how [could it be presumed] that animals monopolize creation and invention? For the spider, the bee, and all the animals produce fine works which puzzle the minds of the intelligent; how could they invent such works alone, without the aid of the supreme Lord, and without being aware of the details of their acquired skill (*iktisāb*)?³ Away, away [with such thoughts!] Let His creatures be humbled and let Him, the all-powerful, rule supreme in heaven and on earth.

(2) The second fundamental: God is the sole creator of His servants' actions (*harakāt*), but these are also within the capacity (*qudrah*) of the servants through acquisition (*iktisāb*).⁴ For God most high created both the capacity and what it can accomplish, the choice and the chosen. Capacity is merely descriptive in reference to the servant, but it is the creation of the Lord and not His acquisition. Action (*harakah*) is the creation of the Lord but descriptive of the servant and an acquisition by him for it was created by the power (*qudrah*) which is one of His attributes.⁵ But action is related to another capacity and this relationship makes it an acquisition.⁶

How can human actions be all by compulsion (*jabran*) when man knows instinctively the difference between his voluntary and involuntary movements? Or how can they be man's creation (*khalqan*) when he has no comprehensive knowledge of the minute details of the acquired movements and their number? Now since both propositions have been shown to be false there remains only the golden mean in belief,⁷ namely that

¹ *Istadalla 'ala'l 'ilmi bi'l khalq*, following Murtaḍā, loc. cit., cf. Faris (p. 78): 'He knows the orientation of their works, having arrived at this knowledge through [the act of] creation.'

² By *harakāt* is clearly meant *af'āl* (actions, works), but there is no ambiguity in a literal translation here.

³ On the theological significance of *iktisāb* see the next note. Al-Ghazālī's use of the term here has a meaning akin to the strict theological sense. Hence Faris's translation of the sentence in which it occurs must be questioned: '... are not aware of the benefits they produce' (p. 78).

⁴ This fundamental is concerned with the problem of *kasb* or *iktisāb* (acquisition), recognized by early theologians as one of the most intricate of the arguments of *kalām*. 'Finer than al-Ash'arī's

kasb!', goes the saying. The opponents of al-Ash'ar put it down as an impossibility: allowing man capacity (*qudrah*) which cannot be effective! further Murtaḍā, ii. 166.

⁵ *Khuliqat maqdūrah bi-qudrah hiya wasfuhi*. Faris (p. 79): 'Created voluntary through will. . . .' The text is clearly concerned with *qudrah*, not *irādah*.

⁶ This sentence adds very little to the sense, it may have been intended as a vague comp. The meaning of 'another capacity (*qudrah*)' may elucidated by the argument that follows, but also n. 3 above.

⁷ Al-Ghazālī actually uses the words *al-fil i'tiqād* which are of course the title of one of his works.

[man's actions] are initiated by the power of God most high and, through acquisition, by a relative capacity of man himself.¹

But the connexion of the created with the power of the creator need not be restricted to creation from nothing, since the power of God most high was from all eternity connected with the universe without any such creation taking place through it [as yet], and since at the time when creation from nothing does take place there is between them another kind of connexion. From the foregoing it is evident that the power is not dependent upon the occurrence of creation.

(3) The third fundamental is that, though acquired, the actions of God's servant are still willed (*murād*) by God most high. For nothing happens in the seen and unseen universe (*al-mulk wa al-malakūt*), not even a twinkling of an eye or an unguarded thought, except by God's pre-determined purpose (*qaḍā'*),² His power, and His will. He is the cause (*minhu*) of good and evil, benefit and harm, Islam and infidelity, acknowledgement and denial [of God], success and failure, rectitude and error, obedience and rebellion, association of other gods with Him and belief [in Him alone]. There is nothing that can defeat His predetermined purpose, and none to question His dominion. 'He leads astray whomsoever He will, and He guides whomsoever He will';³ 'He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned.'⁴

All of this is confirmed in the traditional unanimity of the community that what God wills comes into being, and what He does not never comes into being. It is further confirmed by the word of God most high: 'If God had willed, He would have guided men all together';⁵ 'If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance.'⁶

It is still further confirmed by [human] reason: if disobedience to God and crime, abhorrent to God and not willed by Him but rather willed by the devil *iblis*⁷ (God curse him!) it would mean that what takes place in accordance with the will of this enemy is greater than what takes place in accordance with His will most high. I cannot imagine a Muslim permitting himself to reduce the status of the mighty God from His position of majesty and honour to a level which were a village chief reduced to it he would disdain to accept it. For if he found that the writ of his enemy in the village runs further than his own he would disdain his chieftainship and renounce his office.

¹ This is the final position taken by the Sunnah theologians: That man's action is influenced by the sum of God's creation (*khalq*) and man's choice (*ikhtiyār*), not by the first alone to be (*jabr*), nor by the second alone to be (*qadar*). Cf. Murtaḍā, ii, 167, 168 f.

² According to the Ash'ari school, His *qaḍā'* is related to His *irādāh*; on the other hand His *qadar*

is related to His *khalq*. See Murtaḍā, ii, 172.

³ Sūrah xiv. 4; xvi. 93.

⁴ Sūrah xxi. 23.

⁵ Sūrah xliii. 31.

⁶ Sūrah xxxii. 13.

⁷ See the article on 'Iblis' by A. J. Wensinck in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* (ed. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers), 145-6.

The prevalence of disobedience among His creatures is explained by the deviators (*mubtadi'ah*) as contrary to the will of God, thus reducing Him to the most extremes of weakness and impotence. May He the supreme Lord be exalted very high above this essay (*qaul*) of the unjust (*ẓālimūn*).¹ Thus the more it is realized that the actions of His servants are created by God the more it becomes correct that they are willed by Him. If it is asked 'why does He forbid what He wills, and orders what He does not will?' we would reply that order (*amr*) is different from will (*irādah*).² Hence [the following example]:

A master strikes his slave and is rebuked by the sultan. He offers as an excuse the rebellious conduct of the slave, but the sultan refuses to believe him. Desirous of proving himself right he gives an order which he knows the slave would disobey in the presence of the sultan. 'Saddle that beast!' he said, thus ordering what he really does not want the slave to obey. But without giving the order his excuse would not have been apparent to the sultan. On the other hand, if he really wanted obedience he would have wanted his own destruction which is impossible.

(4) The fourth fundamental is that creation, creation from nothing and the imposition of duties (*taḳlīf*) upon His servants are by His grace and favour the most high. Neither creation nor such imposition was ever an obligation (*wājib*) upon Him. The Mu'tazilah maintain that they were obligations upon Him because they are in the interest (*maṣlahah*) of His servants. But this is impossible since it is He who imposes obligation (*mūjib*),³ He who commands and He who prohibits. How can He be liable to any obligation or be subject to any compulsion or command?⁴

Obligation here has two meanings: (a) either [the performance of] an act the neglect of which will result in future or immediate injury future as in the statement 'It is the duty of the servant to obey God so that He will not torture him in hell-fire in the next world', and immediate as in the statement 'He who is thirsty must drink [water] lest he dies' (b) or anything [the assumption of] the non-existence of which would lead to what is impossible—such as the statement that [recognition of the existence of what is known is obligatory, since its non-existence would lead to an impossibility which is the conversion of knowledge into ignorance.

If the [Mu'tazili] adversary attaches the first meaning to his assertion that creation is an obligation upon God, he makes Him liable to injury

¹ The reference is clearly to the Mu'tazilah who were known to their followers as the people of justice and unity '*ahlu'l 'adl wa't tauḥīd*'.

² Faris missed the point when he translated (p. 81): 'We would say that the question is not that of will.' The argument is designed to separate *amr* from *irādah* and to establish that the one does not

necessitate the other. Thus disobedience is by will (*irādah*) of God but not by his command (Cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 175 f.

³ Translated by Faris (p. 81) as 'the sole cause

⁴ Obligation here is for *ijāb* and co *khifāb*.

if he adopts the second meaning he has lost the argument,¹ for [he recognizes that] the existence of the known is inevitable after fore-knowledge of it. But if he intends a third meaning he does not make himself intelligible. His assertion that [creation and imposition of duties are] obligatory in the interest of His servants is fallacious. For if no injury befalls Him through neglecting what is in the interest of the servants then obligation would be meaningless. Further, the interest of the servants is for Him to create them in Paradise, and thus those endowed with intelligence find no comfort in that He created the servants in the abode of calamities and exposed them in it to sin, and later He subjects them to the dangers of punishment and the awe of resurrection and judgement.²

(5) The fifth fundamental is that, contrary to al-Mu'tazilah, God (glory be to Him) may impose obligations on the servants which are beyond their ability.³ For were it not so, it would be impossible for them to pray Him not to impose it; and they did in fact pray Him saying: 'Our Lord, do Thou not burden us beyond what we have strength to bear.'⁴ Also because God most high informed His Prophet (God bless him and save him) that Abū Jahl⁵ would not believe him,⁶ and then He commanded the Prophet to call Abū Jahl to believe all God's words which included the [prediction] of Abū Jahl's disbelief. How then could he believe Him by not believing?⁷ Is this [proposition] anything but impossible to conceive?

(6) The sixth fundamental is that, again contrary to al-Mu'tazilah, God (to whom glory and majesty belong) may inflict pain on His creatures or torment them for no previous offence or subsequent reward. For He has absolute control over [His creatures in] His dominion, and any dominion outside it is inconceivable for His control to embrace it. Thus injustice, which is the disposal of what belongs to others without permission, is impossible in God most high, for He encounters no possessions of others besides Him so that His disposal of these possessions could be injustice.

Now the proof that [causing pain for no offence or reward] is permissible (*jā'iz*) is its presence in practice. Thus the slaughter of animals, and

¹ Reading *musallim* as the context and sequel demand, and not 'Muslim' as in Faris (p. 82).

² Like his master, al-Ghazālī is here at pains to refute al-Mu'tazilah's contention that God is obliged to do what is best for His servants. For to accept this view is to deny His power (*qudrah*) not to do what is best. Cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 180.

³ Murtaḍā, ii. 181-4, discusses the inherent paradox in this doctrine and surveys the views of the different schools. Abū Ḥanīfah, among others, took the position supported by the Qur'ān ii. 286 (beginning of the verse): 'God charges no soul save to its capacity.'

⁴ Sūrah ii. 286 (towards the end of the verse):

⁵ According to another report it is Abū Lahab. See Murtaḍā, ii. 180-1.

⁶ A single short sentence with ten pronouns!

⁷ *Fa kaifa yuṣaddiquhu fi annahu la yuṣaddiquhu*. If (see Murtaḍā, ii. 181) this refers to Abū Lahab it would mean, with reference to the Qur'ān cxi, that God commanded him to believe in the revelation which included that he would not believe, i.e. He commanded him to believe that he does not believe. If it refers to Abū Jahl, Subki, *Ṭabaqāt*, iv. 146, says he found no *isnād* for the tradition. See, however, Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 246-7; cf. below p. 119, n. 3.

the various kinds of torture they suffer at the hands of man, is for no previous offence they committed. If it is said that God will reward such animals in the next world for what they had suffered, and that this was incumbent upon Him, we would reply as follows: He would go beyond the bounds of religious law and reason who would maintain that it is incumbent upon God to bring back to life every ant killed under the feet and every bug crushed between the fingers, in order to reward it for its suffering. For he would thereby consider bringing to life and rewarding as obligations on Him. But this is impossible if he means it would be harmful for Him to neglect; if he means otherwise we have already shown that it is not intelligible,¹ since it is not in accordance with the meaning of obligation we mentioned [at the end of the fifth fundamental.]

(7) The seventh fundamental is that He most high does what He wills with His servants, and it is not incumbent upon Him to do what is most favourable (*aṣlah*) for them, because of what we have already explained, namely that nothing is incumbent upon Him, nay, obligation in relation to Him is inconceivable. For verily 'He shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned'.²

Considering the Mu'tazili contention that it is incumbent upon God to do the favourable for His servants, I wonder what his reply would be to the following question we pose for him: Let him assume a comparison³ in the next world between two who died Muslims, a minor boy and a mature adult.⁴ According to the Mu'tazili doctrine it is incumbent upon God to elevate and prefer the adult over the boy on account of his toil in belief and worship after maturity.⁵ Suppose the boy prayed 'O Lord why hast thou elevated him over me?', and God would say 'Because after maturity he was diligent in worship.' Then the boy would say 'Lord! thou hast caused me to die a child; it was incumbent upon Thee to prolong my life till maturity so that I could be diligent; Thou hast deviated from justice by favouring him with long life, but not me; why hast thou [favoured him?]' And God would say 'Because I knew you would take associates with me or disobey me had you attained maturity; it was better for you (*al-aṣlah*) to die a child'. Such would be the Mu'tazili's excuse in behalf of God (to whom glory and majesty belong)!

¹ From this word to the end Faris (p. 84) does not seem to grasp the meaning.

² Sūrah xxi. 23.

³ *Munāẓarah* cannot, as presumed by Faris (p. 85), mean 'argument' here. Rather it means comparison; there was no argument between the boy and the adult; such an 'argument' was between the boy and God!

⁴ This very subject was argued by al-Jubba'i and

al-Ash'ari. It is reported that the former made reply to the last hypothetical question, and well known that in consequence al-Ash'ari diated al-Mu'tazilah and became the champion of Sunni orthodoxy.

⁵ I.e. attaining the legal age of puberty (the earliest being twelve, when the Muslim is *mukallaf*, subject to the ordinances and duties of faith.

Hearing this [dialogue with God,] the infidels from the abyss of hell would call: 'O Lord, hast thou not known that we would have taken associates with Thee on attaining maturity, why hast thou not caused us to die in childhood? We would have been content [in paradise] with a lower status than that of the Muslim boy!' With what could this question be answered? None except a definite decision that divine questions are too sublime and majestic to be decided by the logic (*mizān*) of the Mu'tazilah.

If it is argued that it would be [morally] ugly and unworthy of His wisdom, while possessing the power to do the most favourable for His servants, He subjects them to what earns them punishment, we would reply: The meaning of ugly is that which does not suit the desires [of man], so that the same thing could be ugly to one person and pleasant to another according to whether or not it suits his desire. Thus the murder of a person is an ugly act to his relatives but desirable to his enemies.

If [in the above argument] it is meant by ugly that which does not suit the Lord's desire then it is impossible: He has no desire, and it is inconceivable that anything ugly, or injustice, should proceed from Him, since it is inconceivable that He should dispose of possessions other than His own. If, on the other hand, it is meant by ugly that which does not suit the desire of another [besides the Lord], then why did you [i.e. the Mu'tazilah] maintain that it was impossible for Him? Is this anything but a vain attachment¹ [to a doctrine] disproved by our supposed plea of the [infidels] in hell?

The wise (*ḥakīm*) [in reference to Him] means the all-knowing (*ʿālim*) of the realities of all things and the all-powerful (*qādir*) to perfect their make according to His will (*irādah*). This being so, in what way could it be made incumbent upon Him to do the most favourable to His servants?² On the other hand the wise among us [men] is he who seeks the most favourable for himself so that he will earn praise in this world and reward in the next or to ward off evil from himself—all of which is impossible for God most high.

(8) The eighth fundamental is that the knowledge (*maʿrifah*) of God and obedience (*ṭāʿah*) to Him is a duty imposed [upon man] by God's command and law (*sharʿ*), and not as the Mu'tazilah maintain by human reason (*ʿaql*). For³ were obedience dictated by reason, it would be either

¹ Reading *tashabbuh*, contrary to the manuscripts, two of which have *tashahhi*, and to the printed texts which both have *tashabbuh*. Faris's translation (p. 86) has 'wishful thinking'.

² It seems that al-Ghazālī is here attacking the Mu'tazilah who maintained that the *ḥakīm* is he whose actions are calculated to bring benefit either to himself or others. Faris does not see that the

reference here is to God; hence his translation of the second sentence is inadequate: 'It is here where the consideration of that which is salutary is imperative' (p. 87). Cf. Murtaḍā, ii. 189–90.

³ The printed texts, but not the manuscripts, have *wa-in*, and the translation would in this case read: 'For even were obedience. . . .'

for no benefit, which is impossible, since reason does not dictate what is futile, or it would be for a benefit and selfish aim. This [motive] must either refer to God (*al-ma'būd*) which is impossible since He is inviolably above selfish aims and desires, nay, belief and unbelief, obedience and disobedience are in reference to Him most high indifferently alike; or it must refer to man's (*al-'abd*) selfish aim which is also impossible since his [expected] benefit is either in this world or in the next:¹ in this world he has none but that which causes him toil and deflects him from indulging his sensual appetites; in the next he can expect nothing but reward and punishment. But how can [man] know that God most high rewards for obedience and disobedience and does not punish for them, since obedience and disobedience are in reference to Him indifferently alike, and He has no preference to, or identification with, the one or the other?

It is only through God's Law (*shar'*) that such matters can be comprehended; and verily he errs who derives his comprehension of them from an analogy between the Creator and His creature, who [unlike the Creator] is not indifferent to gratitude and ingratitude and the amount of satisfaction, excitement, and enjoyment which he derives from the one and not from the other.² Here someone might say this: If the scrutiny and knowledge [of the faith] are obligatory only through the law, and the law cannot be understood by the one called to belief (*mukallaf*) without scrutiny, such one might answer the prophet who calls him to belief 'Reason does not dictate scrutiny to me, and I cannot comprehend the law without scrutiny, but I do not wish to undertake scrutiny [unless it has been made obligatory]'³—will that lead to silencing the prophet?

We would say in reply that this supposition resembles the following dialogue. One person says to another standing in a certain place: 'There is surely behind you a carnivorous lion; if you do not leave your place he will kill you, and if you look back you will see my truthfulness.' The one standing retorts 'Your truthfulness will not be established unless I look back, and I do not look back to see unless your truthfulness is proven.' This retort indicates the foolishness of the one who made it and exposure to destruction, but there is no harm in his attitude to the person who gave him the warning.

Such is the case with the prophet of God.⁴ He would say to men 'verily there is behind you death and this⁵ side of it carnivorous lions and burning

¹ For the Arabic *fī'l ḥāl* and *fī'l ma'āl*, missed by Faris (p. 87) who produced 'since the creature has no desire at the time, but rather he is worried by reason'.

² Cf. Faris (p. 88): 'from the one or the other'. The text has *dīna'l ākhar*.

³ The words in brackets occur only in the London

MS. 45818, the Cairo MS. 66, and in M ii. 194.

⁴ Both al-Ghazālī and his commentator this to refer to any of the prophets and not sarily to Muḥammad.

⁵ Whether it is 'this' or 'that' side of death a debatable question. See Murtaḍā, ii. 194.

fires. If you are not on your guard against them, and if you do not acknowledge my truthfulness confirmed by my miracle, you will perish. He who will look round will know, take precautions, and be saved; but he who will not look round and persists [in his folly] will perish. No harm will befall me even if all men perished [in this way]. Mine is merely to give clear warning.'¹

Now the law recognizes the existence of carnivorous lions after death, and reason helps towards the understanding of the prophet's speech and the comprehension of the possibility of what he says concerning the future, and human nature itself takes precaution against what is harmful. It is meant by obligatory (*wājib*) anything the neglect of which is harmful; it is meant by the law as obligating (*mūjib*) that it warns of expected harm [in case of neglect.] But when sensual appetites reign supreme, reason does not warn of harm after death.

This is then the meaning of law and reason and their respective influence in determining what is obligatory. Obligation (*wujūb*) would not be established but for fear of punishment for neglecting what is prescribed. Hence obligatory has no meaning except that its neglect is connected with harm in the hereafter.

(9) The ninth fundamental is that the mission (*bi'thah*) of prophets is not impossible. This is contrary to the Brahmans who maintain that no benefit could be derived from sending prophets since reason is a [better] alternative to them.² [But reason is not an alternative]³ because it does not guide to works which earn salvation in the hereafter, just as it does not guide to medicines useful to health [in this world]. Hence the need of God's creatures for prophets is as their need for physicians, but whereas the truthfulness of the physician may be known through trial, that of the prophet is known by miracle.

(10) The tenth fundamental is that God most high sent Muḥammad (God bless and save him) as the seal of prophets and as an abrogator of the [religious] laws of the Jews, Christians, and Sabaeans⁴ that existed before him, and confirmed him with clear miracles and dazzling signs, such as the splitting of the moon,⁵ the praise of [God by] the pebbles,⁶ the causing of mute animals to speak,⁷ the gushing of water from between his

¹ There are several verses in this sense in the Qur'ān, e.g. v. 99.

² How much al-Ghazālī knew about the Brahmans of his time is not clear from this statement. See article on Brahmanism by H. Jacobi in Hastings's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ii. 799 ff.

³ The sentence in brackets is from Murtaḍā's commentary, ii. 197. The margin of MS. 45818 has *wāḥādha bāḥil* which was included in the edited Arabic text. MS. 26574 has in the text *wa-laisa*

kadhālik.

⁴ *Aṣ-Ṣābi'ah* are placed in the Qur'ān (ii. 62; v. 69; xxii. 17) along with the Jews and Christians among the 'people of the book', those in possession of a revealed book. See article by Carra de Vaux in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 477-8.

⁵ Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo, 1296 A.H.), iv. 226; Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 343-4.

⁶ Cf. Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 203-4; Tirmidhi's *Ṣaḥīḥ* (Cairo, 1292 A.H.) ii. 284-6.

⁷ Cf. Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, iv. 160-1.

fingers,¹ and the clear sign of the great Qur'ān with which He challenged all the Arabs.²

For they defamed the Prophet, asked him to desist, and even attempted to kill him.³ But despite their distinction in eloquence and rhetoric they failed to confront him with anything like the Qur'ān. The reason is that it is beyond human capacity to imitate its purity of language and style, let alone what it contains of reports about ancient peoples [proclaimed by a prophet] who was illiterate and did not read books, and what it contains of forecasts of the unknown which future events proved true, as in His words the most high: 'you shall enter the Holy Mosque, if God wills, in security, your heads shaved, your hair cut short';⁴ *Alif Lām Mīm*. The Greeks have been vanquished in the nearer part of the land; and, after their vanquishing, they shall be the victors in a few years.'⁵

That miracles are proof of the truthfulness of God's messengers is clear from the fact that what man cannot do must be the work of God most high. Therefore whatever [miracle] the messenger links to his challenge [to the people] amounts to a confirmation of his truthfulness by God. Here is an example. A man standing before the king, with claims that he is the king's messenger to his subjects, seeks to prove it to those present. He says to the king: 'If I am truthful, then stand up and sit down three times on your throne contrary to your habit.' Should the king do that he would thereby furnish those present with certain knowledge that his action amounts to saying 'you are truthful'.

The Fourth Pillar of the Faith is Beliefs Accepted on Authority and Believing the Prophet's Reports, Comprises Ten Fundamentals.

(1) The first fundamental is belief in the resurrection (*ḥashr*) and reckoning (*nashr*) [with the dead on the Last Day]. Both are mentioned in the authenticated law (*shar'*)⁶ and belief in them is obligatory, since [also] they are mentally possible. Their meaning is restoration to life after death which, like the initial creation, is within the power of God most high who said [of a certain unbeliever]: 'He says, "who shall quicken the bones when they are decayed?"' Say [the command is to Muḥammad] "He shall quicken them, who originated them the first time."⁷ Restoration [to life] is thus proven by the initial creation. He

¹ Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, iv. 157; Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 204.

² I have taken the pronoun to refer to God, not to Muḥammad. See the Qur'ān ii. 22-23; x. 38; xi. 13-14. See Zamakhsharī's *Kashshāf* (Calcutta, 1856) i. 51-54; 584; 605-6.

³ The texts are all defective: I have read *sabbihi* for *sabyihi*, and *nahyihi* for *nahbihi* as more in accord with historical facts. Faris (p. 90) has evaded these difficulties by writing 'did everything to checkmate him'.

⁴ Sūrah xlviii. 27, forecasting the capture of Mecca by Muḥammad.

⁵ Sūrah xxx. 1-4, forecasting the defeat of the Persians at the hands of the Byzantines and the recovery of Syria in A.D. 628.

⁶ The intention is to say tradition (*ḥadīth*). For tradition on *ḥashr* see Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, iv. 68, Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 340, 355-6, 359.

⁷ Sūrah xxxvi. 78-79.

also said (to whom glory and majesty belong): 'Your creation and your upraising are but as that of a single soul.'¹ Thus restoration is a second creation which is as possible as the first.

(2) The second fundamental is the interrogation of [the dead by the two angels] Munkar and Nakir. This is covered by traditional reports (*akhbār*)² and belief in it is obligatory since [also] it is mentally possible: it requires no more than restoring life to that part of the body which comprehends speech. This in itself is possible, and cannot be denied by [citing as an example] the apparent helplessness (*sukūn*) of the members of the body of the dead and by our inability to hear its interrogation. For although a person asleep appears outwardly helpless (*sākin*) he inwardly feels pain and pleasure and feels their effects on awakening. Thus the Messenger of God (God bless and save him) used to hear the voice of Jibrīl (peace be upon him) and to see him, while those around neither heard nor saw him.³ 'And they comprehend not anything of His knowledge save such as He wills.'⁴ For unless He created in them [special faculties for] hearing and seeing they would not have been aware of him.

(3) The third fundamental is the torment of [the dead in] the grave, which is mentioned in the law (*shar'*).⁵ God most high said: '... the fire to which they shall be exposed morning and evening; and on the day when the Hour is come: "Admit the folk of Pharaoh into the most terrible chastisement!"'⁶ It is also well attested that the Messenger of God (God bless and save him)⁷ and the righteous ancestors of the community used to pray God to save them from [future] torment in the grave.⁸ It is [also] mentally possible and thus it is obligatory to believe in it.⁹ Belief must not be withheld [even] on the ground that the members of a dead body were scattered in the bellies of lions and the gizzards of birds, for pain of punishment is felt only by particular members of the body to which God most high has the power to restore feeling.¹⁰

(4) The fourth fundamental is [the weighing of the actions of men by] the balance (*mīzān*). It is valid truth. God most high said: 'And We shall set up the just balances for the Resurrection Day';¹¹ 'He whose scales are heavy—they are the prosperers, and he whose scales are light—they have

¹ Sūrah xxxi. 28.

² Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 358.

³ Ibid., 246–7. And yet Subki, iv. 146, lists this tradition among those in al-Ghazālī's work to which he could find no *isnād*. Cf. p. 113, n. 7 above.

⁴ Sūrah ii. 255.

⁵ It seems that the term means here the totality of Islamic tradition: the Qur'ān, the Traditions of the Prophet, and the consensus of the early community. See Murtaḍā, ii. 218. Hence Faris's 'tradition' (p. 93) is inadequate.

⁶ Sūrah xl. 46.

⁷ Muḥammad and the other prophets are,

according to tradition, immune from being interrogated, let alone punished. Muḥammad merely commanded his companions to pray God to save them such experience. See Murtaḍā, ii. 217, 218.

⁸ Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 94; Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, i. 163, 247; ii. 357.

⁹ This last sentence is missing in Faris.

¹⁰ It is a debatable question whether the soul (*rūḥ*) will also be restored for the purpose of sharing the pain with a limited portion of the members of the body. See Murtaḍā, ii. 218.

¹¹ Sūrah xxi. 47.

lost their souls.'¹ And the manner of weighing is as follows: God most high causes the [record] sheets (*ṣaḥā'if*) of His servants' actions to show a weight according to their degree in His estimation, so that they realize the justice of His exacting punishment or His grace in forgiveness and multiplying the reward.

(5) The fifth fundamental is [the ordeal of passing over] the bridge (*ṣirāt*) which is spread across and over the middle of Hell, finer than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword. God most high said: 'And guide them [who did evil and worshipped other gods] unto the path of Hell, and halt them to be questioned.'² This is [mentally] possible and thus it is obligatory to believe in it. For He who has power to make the bird fly in the air has the power to make man walk over such a bridge.

(6) The sixth fundamental is that Paradise and Hell are created. God most high said: 'And vie with one another, hasting to forgiveness from your Lord, and to a garden whose breadth is as the heavens and earth, prepared for the godfearing.'³ The word of God 'prepared' proves that it is⁴ created. The literal meaning of the verse must be adopted, since it involves no impossibility. Nor is it valid to say [with the Mu'tazilah] that there is no use (*fā'idah*) in creating Paradise and Hell before the day of reckoning, since God most high 'Shall not be questioned as to what He does, but they shall be questioned'.⁵

(7) The seventh fundamental is that the legitimate imam after the Messenger of God (may God bless and save him) is Abū Bakr, then 'Umar, then 'Uthmān, and then 'Ali (may God be gracious to them.) The Messenger of God never nominated (*naṣṣa 'alā*) an imam himself. For had he done so, the fact would have gained more prominence than his appointment of individual administrators (*wulātun*) or military commanders (*umarā'un 'alā'l junūd*) in certain parts.⁶ If such appointments were well known,⁷ how could [the appointment of Muḥammad's successor as imam of the community] be unknown? Even if it were known [for some time], how could it disappear altogether without being transmitted to us?

Nay, Abū Bakr was not made the imam except by election (*ikhtiyār*) and public homage (*bai'ah*). To assume that there was an explicit injunc-

¹ Sūrah vii. 8-9.

² Sūrah xxxvii. 23-24.

³ Sūrah iii. 133.

⁴ There is obviously no mention of Hell in the verse; the reference is to 'a garden' i.e. Paradise. Cf. Faris, p. 94. (Al-Ghazālī was of course aware of a number of verses which state that Hell was 'prepared' (*u'iddat*) for the infidels.)

⁵ Sūrah xxi. 23.

⁶ Thus he appointed (*istakhlafa, ista'mala*) 'Attāb b. Usaid as governor of Mecca; likewise he appointed (*anmara*) Usāmah b. Zaid as military

commander of an expedition to South Palestine. See Ibn Hishām's *Sīrah* (ed. Muṣṭāfa as-Saqqā *et al.*, Cairo, 1375/1955), part ii, 440, 500, 606. Of course, a governor or a military commander acted also as imam, strictly as deputy to *the* imam of the community, Muḥammad himself.

⁷ Faris misunderstood the previous passage which he translated in part: '... than the designation of a local imam in some parts of the land by unknown governors and army commanders' (pp. 94-95).

tion (*naṣṣ*) designating someone else¹ is tantamount to accusing all the Companions of disobeying the Messenger of God and acting contrary to the consensus (*ijmā'*) of the community. Only the Rawāfiḍ² could be so daring to invent [such insinuation].

To the orthodox (*ahl as-sunnah*) it is an article of belief to uphold the integrity of all the Companions and to praise them, since God and His Messenger praised them.³ As to what happened between 'Ali and Mu'āwiyah (may God be gracious to them) it was due to [a difference of honest] opinion (*ijtihād*), not to a contest on the part of Mu'āwiyah [to wrest] the imamate. 'Ali thought that the handing over of the assassins of 'Uthmān might cause disturbance to [his?] imamate in its early days, since those assassins infiltrated his army which included numerous tribes to which the assassins belonged. Accordingly he considered it more correct (*aṣwab*) to delay. Mu'āwiyah thought that, considering the enormity of the assassins' crime, delay would encourage attacks on the imams and might lead to bloodshed.

The excellent among the learned said 'Everyone who expresses a considered opinion is correct'—*kullu mujtahidin muṣīb*. Others said: 'Only one can be correct'—*al-muṣību wāḥidun*. But no one endowed with learning has ever declared 'Ali wrong.

(8) The eighth fundamental is that the excellence of the Companions (may God be gracious to them) is according to their order in the Caliphate. For true excellence is that which is excellent in the sight of God, and that is disclosed to no one except the Messenger of God. The praise of the Companions occurs in many verses [of the Qur'ān] and many reports [in the Tradition]. But none except eye-witnesses,⁴ who were contemporaneous with the revelation [to Muḥammad] and knew its contextual circumstances and its minute details, can grasp the fine components of excellence and the hierarchical order respecting it.

But for such understanding the Companions would not have ordered the affair [of the imamate] as they did. For no reproach from any reproacher could deter them from the path of God⁵ nor could any obstructor deflect them from truth.

(9) The ninth fundamental is the qualifications for the imamate. Next to Islam and *taklīf*⁶ the qualifications are five: masculinity (*dhukūrah*),

¹ But the claims on behalf of 'Ali are not without solid foundation even in Sunni traditions. See Bukhārī's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, iv. 193; Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 236–8.

² On the *Rāfiḍah* see article by J. H. Kramers in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 466–7.

³ See Murtaḍā, ii. 223.

⁴ Faris's 'eye-witnesses to revelation' is hardly possible (p. 96). His translation of this section as a whole is rather loose. For example, he translated *laumat lā'im* as 'threat and pressure', not recogniz-

ing the phrase as coming from a verse in the Qur'ān. See following note.

⁵ Sūrah v. 54.

⁶ See p. 114, n. 5 above on *bulūgh*, after which imposition of duties (*taklīf*) is legal. This means that the candidate for the imamate must first and foremost be a Muslim and of age. Another qualification is usually attached to the second, soundness of mind. Al-Ghazālī does not mention the qualification of freedom (*hurriyyah*), i.e. from slavery, and

piety (*wara'*), religious learning (*'ilm*), competence (*kafā'ah*), and kinship to Quraish. The last because of his words (may God bless and save him): 'The imams are from Quraish.'¹ Should there be several candidates with these qualifications, the imam [from among them] is the one who receives public homage (*bai'ah*) from the majority of the people (*khalq*). He who goes against this majority is iniquitous (*bāghin*) and must be brought back [by force?] to the way of justice (*haqq*).

(10) The tenth fundamental: If piety and learning should not be possessed by a seeker of the imamate, and if deterring him could lead to inevitable² civil strife (*fitnah*), then we must decide that his imamate is legally binding (*in'iqād*). For in such situation we have only two alternatives: The first is to cause strife in the attempt to replace him, in which case the Muslim community will suffer more damage than from the want of the qualifications [of piety and learning in the imam]. These were stipulated as advantageous for the welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) of the community, but obsession with these advantages must not lead to demolishing the welfare itself. [Otherwise we should be] like him who builds a palace but demolishes a metropolis. The second alternative is to decide that there is no [legally constituted] imam in the land and that all legal decisions are incorrect.³ This is impossible. We acknowledge as indispensable for their needs the authority of the law of the iniquitous (*ahlu'l baghi*) in their own countries, how then could we withhold recognition of the legality of the imamate [of the less qualified] at moments of need and necessity?

These, then, are the four pillars which comprise the forty fundamentals.⁴ They are the foundations of belief; he who embraces them identifies himself with the orthodox believers⁵ and contradicts the band of innovators.⁶

May God most high direct us aright through His succour and guide us to the truth and its realization through His favour and unlimited bounty.⁷ [May He bless our Lord Muḥammad and bless his family and every servant He favours.]⁸

the disqualification of blindness, deafness, and dumbness. See Murtaḍā, ii. 230.

¹ Cf. Muslim's *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ii. 79-80.

² I have followed Murtaḍā, ii. 233 in understanding *lā tuṣāq* to mean 'impossible to avert', cf. Faris (p. 97) 'unbearable'.

³ Since judges dispensed justice and made decisions by the authority of the legally constituted imam or caliph.

⁴ Cf. al-Ghazālī's *Kitāb al-Arba'in fi Uṣūl ad-Dīn* (Cairo, 1328 A.H.). The second edition published in 1344 A.H. has four sections (*aqṣām*), each made up of ten fundamentals (*uṣūl*); it is, of course, part of a larger book entitled *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*.

⁵ *aḥl as-sunnah*.

⁶ *raḥf al bid'ah*.

⁷ Immediately after this, and in the body of the text, MS. 45818 contains two and a half lines: 'And I completed its composition (*taṣnīfihī*) in the Aqṣā Mosque in answer to the request of its people (*aḥlihi*), hoping that we will be favoured with the blessings of the Mosque and blessings from the supplication of those in it, and that God will realize our hope and end our life in bliss, for verily He is the Generous and the Benefactor.' In the margin, and by the same hand, there is another version: 'And I completed [the writing of] *ar-Risālah al-Qudsiyyah*, which I included in this *faṣl*, in the Aqṣā Mosque, in answer to the request. . . .'

⁸ The prayer between brackets is not in the manuscript versions.